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MS 685 The Church Abroad: Cuba

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Asbury Theological Seminary
MS685 The Church Abroad: Cuba – 3 Credit Hours

January 10-28, 2005

Trip on January 14-24, 2005

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DRAFT COURSE SYLLABUS

Purpose

The purpose of this trip/class is to expose participants to the ministry of the church in Cuba in a context of multiple religions and a socialist government. The main focus will be the Methodist Church in Cuba and its relations to the United Methodist Church in the USA. Our hope is that a deeper understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit through the Cuban church will result in a greater passion for the mission of Jesus Christ in our country and into the world.

Course Description

The course is a short-term immersion experience into the so-called "mission field" as experienced through the Methodist Church in Cuba, a church in full Holy Spirit revival. Through prior reading and immersion into the Cuban experience, the course will expose learners to the historic, social, political, cultural and religious background of the people of Cuba. Learners will grasp the similarities and differences between the 18th Century Wesleyan Revival and the Wesleyan charismatic revival in the Methodist Church in Cuba. Participants will discover the contexts in which church and religion interface with the 45-year Cuban Communist government. They will hear the testimonies of Cuban Christians who find themselves daily giving their witness in a difficult environment. In spite of these challenges, the rate of growth of the church, and particularly the Cuban Protestant churches, is the largest in Cuban history.

Course Highlights

- Explore the history, culture and religions of Cuba.
- Experience the practical aspects of life for the common Cuban people today.
- Worship with Cuban Christians in sanctuaries and house churches.
- Participate in their ministry/respond to their invitations to give testimonies and preach.
- Listen, reflect, and learn from the Cuban Church and the people.
- Develop a better understanding of what it means to follow Christ in an environment that traditionally has been hostile to the Christian faith.
- Encourage, support, worship, and pray with the faithful.

Educational Methods

The primary method of education will be a contextual learning in Cuba. Each learner will be an active participant in an unfamiliar environment. And out of this will come new insights and greater wisdom. The following methods will be utilized: lecture, reading, video, web searching on the internet, and written reflection.

Learning Goals: Competencies to be developed by the students

It is expected that learners completing this course will be able to:

1. Discuss the church in Cuba showing an awareness of its major streams, history, strengths and weaknesses, and methodology.
2. Discuss the major principles of the Cuban theology of mission and their implications for communicating the Gospel.
3. Communicate an understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Cuban Church.
4. Communicate a basic understanding of the principles and strategies that are helpful for people wanting to develop ministry partnerships in this country.
5. Share a list of lessons that the US church can learn for the Cuban church, providing biblical commentary for each lesson.
6. Communicate reasons for the use of the short-term mission trips in the local church, and the skills and procedures needed to organize and lead these trips.

READING: Required Resources and Course Texts.

The Required Resources are to be read **BEFORE** the trip. The balance of the pages due can be read after the trip. **Additional reading resources in Spanish are available upon request.**

Braum, Theodore A. (1999), Perspectives on Cuba and its People, Friendship Press, National Council of Churches, NY. 138 pages. 800/889-5733.

Cañizares, Raúl. Cuban Santería. Inner Traditions Intl Ltd; ISBN: 0892817623. 160 pages
Updated edition (March 1, 1999).

Cuba/Florida Covenant Task Force, Florida Conference United Methodist Church (revised 2003)
Guidelines for the Cuba/Florida Covenant Task Force, 73 pages. Available for purchase in the bookstore in Wilmore and from James Loftin's assistant in Florida.

Jatar-Hausmann, Ana Julia (1999), The Cuban Way: Capitalism, Communism and Confrontation, Kumarian Press, 184 pages.

New World Outlook Magazine. May-June 2004, 1-800-305-9857, stock # 3505

Open Doors. Cuba for Christ: The Amazing Revival. A Sovereign World International Booklet published in co-operation with Open Doors, 1999. 40 pages. 800/659-5965.

Ramos, Marcos A. Protestantism and Revolution in Cuba. Miami: The University of Miami, North-South Center for the Research Institute for Cuban Studies, 1989. ISBN 0935501177. 168 pp.

Wingeier-Rayo, Philip Douglas. Cuban Methodism: The Untold Story of Survival and Revival. Dolphins & Orchids Publishing, 2004. ISBN: 0965067335. 128 pages.

READING: Elective Resources. After completing the Required Resources, choose from the following books and movies to complete the 1200 page requirement.

Benazet Mesa, Guido, (1999), A White Dove Over the Island of Cuba, Vol. 1. Published in Orlando, FL. 133 pages. Available for purchase in the bookstore in Wilmore. Booth, Rod, (1998), Video: Cuba: Three Faith Perspectives, Friendship Press, National Council of Churches, Cincinnati, OH, 28:47 minutes. On reserve in the Wilmore and Orlando libraries.

Campbell-Evans, Sally, (1998), People, Places, and Partnerships. Worldwide Ministries Division, Presbyterian Church, USA. 43 pages.

Perez, Joseph. Cuba. GBGM, 2004. 1-800-305-9857, stock # 3598.

Pérez Firmat, Gustavo, (1994) Life on the Hyphen: The Cuban-American Way. University of Texas Press, Austin. 175 pages.

Response MAY 2004 - Cuba Mission Study Special Issue. 1-800-305-9857 stock # 3495

Vigil, María López. Cuba: Neither Heaven Nor Hell. EPICA, 2000. 312 pp. ISBN 0918346231. 1-800-305-9857

MOVIES:

Honey for Oshun (2001, with Jorge Perugorria). Available from Blockbuster. Counts as 100 pages. This movie and the next one will be discussed in class.

Strawberries & Chocolate (1994, with Jorge Perugorria). Available from Blockbuster. Counts as 100 pages. This movie and the previous one will be discussed in class.

AUDIO:

Buena Vista Social Club. Audio CD by Ry Cooder and Buena Vista Social Club, 1998. First of several recordings in CD highlighting the best of traditional secular Cuban music and rhythms. Can be ordered through Amazon.com. 30 pages credit only. On reserve in ATS-F library.

Websites: (Up to 50 downloaded pages can be included in the page count.)

www.cubaweb.cu- Official Cuban government website

www.thecubannation.com- US based website with news and information about Cuba from many sources.

Evaluation

Your grade for the course will be based on your preparation before the trip to Cuba, your involvement in the cross-cultural experience, your completion of assigned readings and your papers. Each student will need to read 1,200 pages (or equivalent) of material. The Required Resources listed above are to be read BEFORE the trip. The balance of the pages due can be read after the trip.

The following are written assignments due before and after the trip:

A. Prior to the trip:

1. A two-page essay on the questions and expectations you bring to this trip and why you feel called to participate.
2. Begin a Journal at least one week prior to the trip and continue the Journal during and at least one week after the trip (Suggestion for journaling found on p. 39, Appendix 16 of the Cuba/Florida Covenant Guidelines). This journal will be for your personal use and you will not be required to turn it in.

B. After the trip:

After the trip a reflection paper must be written and turned in. It should integrate your readings and your personal reflections and experiences while in Cuba. Attached to the paper should be the list of the books and other resources that you have completed. Show the number of pages for each resource. The paper must be typed in 12 point font, double-spaced and have between 14 and 20 pages. Works cited or referred to in your paper should be noted in a formal footnote and in a final bibliography. A hard copy of your paper is due on **Wednesday, February 2, 2005** at 5:00 PM. It can be mailed to Armando J. Rodriguez, Jr., PO Box 373, Alturas, FL 33820, or turned in to the office of Dr. Steve Harper in the Orlando campus.

The paper should:

1. Focus on one of the topics listed on the Learning Goals section of the syllabus
2. Demonstrate your understanding of at least two other topics listed in the Learning Goals section of the syllabus.

3. Communicate something about your personal experience in Cuba. How will your faith and ministry be impacted by this experience?

Late papers will be accepted only if the student discusses the reason with the professor and the professor decides that a situation has developed that is a true “emergency”.

C. Grading breakdown:

<i>Areas</i>	<i>Explanation</i>	<i>% of Grade</i>
Readings	Completion and documentation of the assigned readings	25
Trip	Active participation and an eagerness to learn from our hosts, other team members and the leaders	25
Paper	Timely submission of a paper that is well written, well documented, appropriate in length. It should provide thoughtful commentary on the topics listed as the Learning Goals for this course, and provide personal reflection on the student's experience.	50

The following grading scale will be used:

94-100A	73-76 C
90-93 A-	70-72 C-
87-89 B+	67-69 D+
83-86 B	63-66 D
80-82 B-	60-62 D-
80-83 C+	0 - 59 F

Personal Impact Goals

In addition to helping participant acquire greater knowledge about the church in Cuba and the related subjects mentioned in the Learning Goals section, it is hoped that God will use this course to impact students in the following ways. May God:

- A. Expand our worldview and our understanding of God's global family;
- B. Give us an increased awareness of our need to hear the Good News from persons in other cultures and from new and recent Christian believers;
- C. Increase our faith in the power of the Holy Spirit to change persons in spite of apparently insurmountable barriers;
- D. Give us a deeper passion for reaching those who have not heard the Good News of Jesus Christ;
- E. Clarify our understanding of God's missional call on our lives, and
- F. Apply the lessons learned from the Cuban church in our ministries within our church and country.

Schedule

- A. **No later than November 1, 2004**, turn in the VISA DATA SHEETS for Cuban Religious Visas. **Turn them in to Rev. Rodriguez, Jr., by e mail (arodri3@luc.edu)**
- B. Two orientation classes will be held before the trip. The first session is Monday, **January 10** from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. The second session is Thursday, **January 13**, same hours. Early

on Friday **January 14, we travel to Miami. TRAVEL TIMES ARE SUBJECT** to the available flight reservations.

- C. All participants are expected to be present for these meetings. The trip dates are Friday, January 14 through Monday, January 24, 2005. The flight departs and returns between Miami and Havana.
- D. A final debriefing class will be held after the trip. Participants are expected to be present in Orlando and Wilmore (V-tel) for this time of sharing and celebration on Friday, January 28, 2005 from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm.

Registration

- To participate you must register for MS685: The Church in Cuba and make a \$150 deposit to your student account. Once this deposit is paid a plane ticket and a visa will be purchased with your name on it. You will be responsible for the visa (\$110). The ticket may be partially refundable according to airline deadlines. You must fill out a Cuba Religious Visa Application and turn it in to Rev. Rodriguez (arodri3@luc.edu) by November 1, 2004. A form is found in the Cuba/Florida Covenant Guidelines, Appendix 4, p. 16. Forms will be sent as a bundle to the Methodist Church in Cuba for processing. Contact Rev. Rodriguez if you have any questions.
- *Applicants must NOT be active or in the reserves or in the US Armed Forces. Cuban born students who are American citizens, who left Cuba PRIOR 1979 may apply as US citizens, Those who left AFTER 1979, must apply with a Cuban passport. And that process must begin immediately with the Cuba Interest Section in Washington DC.*
- You must have a valid Passport that **must not expire before June 14, 2005**. If you do not have a Passport, complete an application immediately and overnight mail it to the Passport department per instructions on the application. Applications are available from many post office branches. You will need to send two “passport photos” and your birth certificate with the Passport application. For more information about how to obtain a US passport visit <http://www.travel.state.gov/passport/index.html>
- The class is limited to no more than 12 participants.

Cost

Total cost for the trip per person from Orlando is approximately \$1,642.00. (This price includes the \$150 deposit). This cost includes all travel, food, transportation, and lodging in Cuba. Register and pay for this class as you do to any other ATS class. Please, contact the office of Dr. Steve Harper for more information on how to pay for the trip.

Financial Aid

Students are encouraged to seek support from your home congregations and supervised ministry sites in addition to your own families. This is a class but it is also a mission trip.